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Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 03868 170515Z

13/12
ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-02 SP-03 NSC-07 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06

SIL-01 AGR-20 DRC-01 /148 W
---------- 054533
R 160347Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9006
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT MRN TO READ 3868 VICE 3664)

E.O . 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, LA
SUBJ: WEEKLY ECONOMIC SITUATION REPORT
MAY 7-13

REFERENCE: VIENTIANE 3664#

1. USAID COL INDEX REMAINED VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED DURING PAST WEEK WITH A SLIGHT INCREASE IN PRICE OF BEEF OFFSET BY PRICE DECLINES IN SOME OTHER FOODS.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW TO A LOCAL NEWSPAPER SOTH PHETRASY, PATHET LAO MIN OF NATIONAL ECONOMY AND PLAN STATED THAT PROBLEMS OF CORRUPTION AND DISHONEST MERCHANTS WILL RECEIVE HIGH PRIORITY. ALSO HENCEFORTH GOVERN-MENT WILL NOT AUTHORIZE CUTTING OF TIMBER WITHOUT SUFFICIENT REASONS. HE INDICATED THAT QUOTE ONCE THE CEASE FIRE IS EFFECTIVE UNQUOTE MINISTRY FORESEES PURCHASE OF RICE IN THE LIBERATED ZONE AS WELL AS IN OTHER SURPLUS PROVINCES FOR RESALE IN DEFICIT AREAS.
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CONCERNING THE PL CURRENCY HE STATED THAT PROBLEM

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WILL BE CAREFULLY STUDIED BEFORE REACHING A DECISION WHETHER TO RETAIN EITHER CURRENCY OR CREATE A NEW ONE.

3. LAO DELEGATION TO THE CANTON TRADE FAIR REPORTED ON THEIR RETURN THAT THERE ARE GOOD PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED TRADE WITH THE PRC. CHINA IS APPARENTLY INTERESTED IN SELLING NEWSPRINT, AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, AND FUELS TO LAOS IN EXCHANGE FOR LAO HARDWOODS, TIN, AND COAL FROM THE SARAVANE REGION. DELEGATION REPORTED THAT IT WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY FAIR OFFICIALS.

4. CABINET LAST WEEK REPORTEDLY AGREED TO SEND CIVIL AIR DELEGATION TO HANOI TO RE-OPEN NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING RAL FLIGHTS TO HANOI. DRV HAS MAINTAINED OLD AGREEMENT GRANTING RAL LANDING RIGEUA STILL VALID, BUT THAT DETAILS NEED TO BE NEGOTIATED.

5. IN AN INTERVIEW TO NY TIMES CORRESPONDENT GAVIN SCOTT, PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN APPROACHED CONCERNING ASSISTANCE TO LAOS BUT THAT NO REPLIES HAVE YET BEEN RECEIVED.

6. TWO WORLD BANK OFFICIALS ARE DUE TO ARRIVE MAY 22 FOR A SHORT PRELIMINARY STUDY OF POSSIBLE IBRD PARTICIPATION IN LAO DEVELOPMENT. ARRIVAL OF A LARGER GROUP IS PLANNED FOR JULY.

7. DECONTROL FOLLOWING 5/15/75.
WHITEHOUSVW

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